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Bilbo Proposes Mrs. Roosevelt As Liberian Queen

Links It with Plan To Send 2,500,000 Negroes to Africa

By the Associated Press.

WASHINGTON, June 20.—Senator Theodore G. Bilbo (D., Miss.), author of legislation proposing to resettle Negroes in West Africa, told the Senate today he might consider making Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt "Queen of that Greater Liberia."

Senator Bilbo was debating an amendment to a billion-dollar war agencies appropriation bill which would kill off the Fair Employment Practices Committee, created by Presidential executive order to adjust disputes over racial discrimination.

Declaring that two and a half million Negroes want to return to Africa, Senator Bilbo asserted:

"I do not claim any credit for the campaign to resettle the Negroes in West Africa," he said. "President Monroe started it, Jefferson encouraged it, Madison, Abraham Lincoln and President Grant were for it. When such a respectable party of two and one-half million persons request the Congress to give them this relief, this opportunity and this break, I do not see why Mrs. Roosevelt or anyone else should object to it.

"Of course, she did not understand my ultimate plan. If I can succeed eventually in resettling the great majority of the Negroes in West Africa, I might entertain the proposition of making her Queen of that Greater Liberia."

"Mayor" Bilbo Proposes Driving Negroes From Homes and Back to Africa

WASHINGTON, D. C. (NNPA)—A proposal to evict all "alley dwellings" in the nation's capital, almost exclusively occupied by Negroes because of the housing shortage for Negro occupancy, and to send the Negroes to neighboring farms and eventually back to Africa was made by Sen. Theodore Bilbo (D.) of Mississippi, chairman of the Senate District Committee, last week. As chairman of the committee, Bilbo is virtually the "mayor" of Washington.

The suggestion has aroused deep resentment on the part of both white and Negro citizens of the District, despite the claims of Bilbo that he has received "mail pouches" full of congratulatory letters as result of the proposal.

The Washington Post, in an editorial, declared that Senator Bilbo "has begun his career as District 'mayor' with all the finesse that might be expected of a rhinoceros in the National Gallery of Art." His proposal was described as one which "reeks with prejudice, social backwardness and Hitlerian technique." It is "conceived in bigotry and dedicated to the provocation of racial animosities that are an obvious menace to the Nation," the Post declared.

Bilbo based his proposal for eviction of the alley dwellers on a Congressional act creating the D. C. Alley Dwelling Authority, which originally set up a 10-year period for clearing out the alleys as dwelling places. The 10-year period expires on July 1, 1944. Bilbo said he would enforce the provisions of the act.

Congress, however, after enacting the law, failed to provide the funds necessary for constructing suitable housing to take care of this slum-clearance project.

Assurances have been given by other Senators—among them La-Follette (Prog.) of Wisconsin, Burton (R.) of Ohio, and Taft (R.) of Ohio—that the threatened July eviction date would not materialize.

Senator Taft termed Bilbo's suggestion as "foolishness." He and Senator Burton indicated that Congress would grant an extension of the deadline.

The record, however, reveals that while Negroes are being forced because of housing shortage to occupy the alleys—giving rise to disease and crime—there has been an overbuilding of housing units for whites which are now standing idle and vacant.

Because of the pattern of segregation in the Nation's capital, these vacant houses are denied to Negroes. Bilbo has made no suggestion that they be used to house the poor and needy families he seeks to evict. Instead he says:

"It is a notorious fact that great hordes of criminal elements—undesirables from States around the District—are being unloaded in Washington, and because of overcrowded conditions they find haven in alleys and other blighted areas.

"My demands that the law closing the alleys to human habitation should be strictly enforced is a humanitarian move. I am the best friend the Negro has. I want to help him in a substantial way. I want him to get into the habit of moving so as to be ready for my movement to West Africa."

In the meantime, the War Manpower Commission has revealed that housing for Negroes in Washington is at such a critical stage that it has recommended that no more Negroes be brought here for war work until the conditions are remedied.

10,500 W. Indian Workers in U.S.

WASHINGTON

Approximately 10,500 West India workers were employed or available for employment in agriculture in seventeen States during the early part of December, according to the Office of labor in the War Food Administration.

Jamaicans, numbering 5,773, were distributed in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusett, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Florida.

4,760 Bahamians

The 4,760 Bahamian farm workers were employed in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Florida.

In addition to the farm workers, there were about 6,000 Jamaicans and 250 Barbadians employed in industry.

Pullman Workers to Be Organized

CHICAGO—A drive to organize the several thousand Pullman repair shop workers in plants located at Chicago, Buffalo, Wilmington, St. Louis, Atlanta, and Richmond, Calif., was inaugurated recently by the CIO United Transport Service Employees of America.

Edward K. Welsh, UTSEA director of organization, will be in charge of the nation-wide Pullman drive. Headquarters have been set up in the six cities involved. Several new organizers are to be added to the union's staff.

UTSEA Leon M. Despres general council, has filed notice to appear before the Federal District Court in Philadelphia to present plans to safeguard the interests of Pullman employees in the proposed plan to dispose of Pullman operating properties.